



Department of Justice

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FORMER FUNDRAISER THOMAS W. NOE PLEADS GUILTY TO CONSPIRACY, CAUSING A FALSE STATEMENT AND ILLEGAL CAMPAIGN CONTRIBUTIONS

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Former Republican fundraiser Thomas W. Noe has pleaded guilty to conspiracy to make illegal campaign contributions, causing a false statement to the Federal Election Commission (FEC), and knowingly and willfully making \$45,400 in illegal campaign contributions to President Bush's 2004 re-election campaign, Assistant Attorney General Alice S. Fisher of the Criminal Division and U.S. Attorney Gregory A. White of the Northern District of Ohio announced today.

The plea was accepted by the Hon. David A. Katz of the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Ohio, Western Division, in Toledo.

During his guilty plea hearing, Noe admitted that in October 2003, he made contributions to Bush-Cheney '04, Inc., over and above the limit established by the Federal Election Campaign Act (FECA). Noe admitted disguising these contributions by recruiting and providing money to friends and associates who then used Noe's money to make contributions in their own names. Noe contributed \$45,400 of his own money through 24 such conduits. To avoid suspicion, he gave several conduits checks in amounts slightly less than the maximum allowable amount and instructed several conduits to falsely characterize his payments to them as loans.

Noe pleaded guilty to each of the three counts in the indictment. The first count charged Noe with conspiring to violate the FECA's anti-conduit provision by making contributions in the names of others, and with conspiring to fraudulently disrupt and impede the public disclosure and enforcement responsibilities of the FEC. The second count charged Noe with a substantive violation of the FECA's anti-conduit provision, and the third count charged him with causing the submission of a false statement to the FEC. The false statement occurred when Noe caused Bush-Cheney '04, Inc., to unknowingly submit a campaign finance report listing the conduit donors as contributors, when the contributions actually came from Noe.

The maximum sentence on each count is five years in prison. The conspiracy and false statement counts carry a maximum fine of \$250,000, and the FECA count carries a mandatory fine of between \$136,200 and \$454,000.

This case is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorneys Seth D. Uram and David O. Bauer of the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Northern District of Ohio, which is headed by U.S. Attorney Gregory A. White, and trial attorney John P. Pearson of the Public Integrity Section of the Criminal Division, which is headed by Acting Section Chief Andrew Lourie. The case was investigated by the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

